

U.S. Rep. Schakowsky sails into 3rd term; □
Congresswoman takes landslide victory in taking 70 percent of 9th District vote
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Voters overwhelmingly re-elected Democratic U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky Tuesday to a third term as Illinois' Ninth District congresswoman.

Schakowsky won 70 percent of the vote, with 98 percent of precincts reporting. Republican Nicholas Duric polled 27 percent, and Libertarian Stephanie "vs. The Machine" Sailor won 3 percent of nearly 169,000 votes cast.

"I feel great about my race," Schakowsky said. "If the Senate goes Democratic, I'm going to be very, very happy."

As of 2:30 a.m. today, Republicans had been projected to hold 50 seats in the Senate, giving them guaranteed control of the house, because Vice President Dick Cheney can cast the deciding vote in the event of a tie.

But at a Democratic Party of Evanston gathering at Prairie Moon, 1502 Sherman Ave., several candidates and supporters celebrated multiple victories -- including that of state Rep. Julie Hamos, D-Evanston, who also won her third term; and Jeffrey Schoenberg, who ran unopposed for the state Senate district that includes Evanston.

Schakowsky's re-election in the solidly Democratic Ninth District, which also includes Skokie, Niles, Ill., and Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood, came nearly as easily as it did in 2000, when she won 76 percent of the vote. Before her first election to the U.S. House in 1998, Schakowsky served in the state House of Representatives.

Duric maintained little presence during the campaign, and Sailor launched her effort on the Web, eschewing campaign contributions.

Schakowsky spent Tuesday visiting polling places. She said she was impressed by voter turnout in some places.

"Every time she has run, it's been pretty much a landslide," said Leonard Kryszewski, a Skokie resident who has worked on Schakowsky's campaigns with his wife, Roslyn. "An amazing number of Republicans vote for her."

Looking toward the future, Schakowsky said Tuesday night that she hopes the Democratic Party takes more of a leadership role during her next term.

"Given the failure of the Republican leadership and the Bush administration to manage the economy, it's remarkable that the Democrats have been unsuccessful in having a winning edge," she said.

During her last term, Schakowsky sponsored a bill that would offer housing assistance to abused women, among other issues. That legislation is still in a congressional subcommittee.

Schakowsky served in the state House of Representatives. In the U.S. House, Schakowsky serves on several significant committees -- including the Homeland Security Task force created after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

On the legislative side, Schakowsky has focused on bills protecting abused women and

expanding housing opportunities for low income families. She has also looked at gun control issues and in 1999 organized the first women's forum on gun safety.

Weinberg seniors Alexis Echols and Demetria Smith played an active role in Tuesday's election, working the phones for another candidate to remind voters to go to the polls. Smith interned for Schakowsky last year, and Echols has worked for her in the past.

"She stands for something and you can count on her to vote for what she says she'll vote for," Echols said. "She's not a typical dirty politician, just saying what people want to hear."

Several students from other local universities worked for Schakowsky this year.

"As corny as it sounds, we're actually participating in the democratic process," said Loyola University freshman Patrick Phillips.

The Daily's Andrew Green contributed to this report.